

Helps to the  
**ASSURANCE**  
OF *B. 42-128*  
**GOD'S LOVE:**

Whereby a true Believer may,  
with the help of Gods good Spirit,  
know that he had a Being in the  
Love of God before he had a Being  
in the World.

To which is Added,  
A spiritual Touch-stone for  
the tryal of the Sincerity of our  
Love to God.

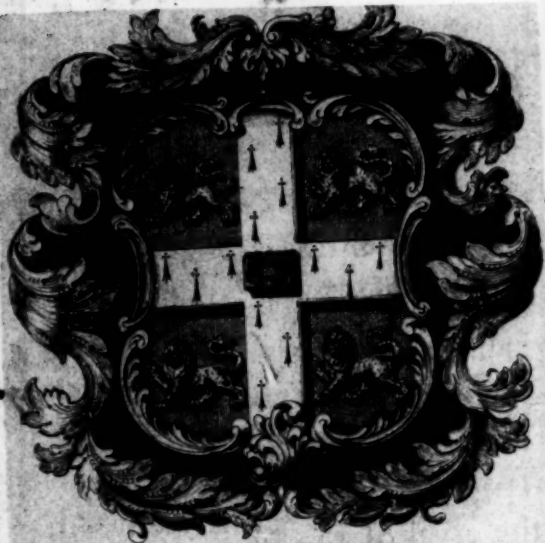
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By *Samuel Pack* Preacher of the  
Gospel.

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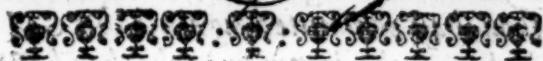
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Academiae Cantabrigiensis  
Liber.

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Wm<sup>o</sup> Longton



THE  
EPISTLE  
TO THE  
READER.

Christian Reader,

**T**He sense of Gods love is that  
which is a Saints Heaven here  
in its inchoation, and shall be  
their Heaven hereafter in its

Consummation. The more thou hast  
of the clear discoveries of Gods love in  
thy heart: The more wilt thou be  
(from thy heart) discovering thy love  
to the God of Love; The brighter the  
love of God doth shine in thy Soul (not-  
withstanding thy sins committed a-  
gainst this loveing God, the more will

(4)  
thy heart burn against thy Sins which  
thou hast committed against this God  
of love; the deeper draught thou hast  
of the assurance of Gods everlasting  
love to thee the more will the waters  
of Marah, even the bitter waters of  
affliction be sweetned unto thee; the  
more thy heart is lifted up in contemp-  
tation of that fulness of comfort and  
joy which the God of love, in the riches  
of his love hath laid up for thee in a-  
nother world, the more wilt thou be  
lifted up above and weaned from an  
inordinate love unto, or delight and  
complacency in the inticeing vanities  
of this world; and forasmuch as this  
love of God in Christ is that sea and  
fun, that mine and fountain from  
whence through Christ we are Parta-  
kers of those Glorious Priviledges of  
Election by God, peace with God  
together with adoption, perseverance,  
and an interest in the new Covenant,  
which contains in the Bowells thereof  
Effectual calling and Pardon of Sin  
and



And a participation of the Spirit in all  
 his saving influential operations, I  
 have therefore I say in the first place  
 laid down 12 characters of Gods love  
 to believers. And now, Reader, I have  
 given thee a hint of that which is con-  
 tained in the sequel of this discourse, I  
 think it not amisse to discover to thee  
 the occasion of the Publishing these  
 few sheets, which is first from some  
 fears and Fealowsies that are upon my  
 Spirit, that God is comeing in some  
 cloudy dispensation; And when God  
 shall be pleased thus to wrap himself up  
 in a cloud, Then nothing will comfort  
 a child of God like the shining face of  
 of Gods love in Christ, and an inte-  
 rest in that Rainbow of his Covenant,  
 in which Covenant he hath made over  
 himself in all his Attributes, for Pro-  
 tection & Consolation in a day of Tri-  
 al: Another cause of my Publishing  
 these lines is the mistakes that are both  
 in the wicked and the Godly about  
 their interest in the love of God;

Rev. 10  
 1.

wicked men they ground their hopes of an interest in Gods love upon their outward injoyments, because they Prosper in the world, and all things go well with them as to their outward concerns; which outward Prosperity is so far from being an evidence of Gods Everlasting love, that it is rather (being unsanctified) a signe of his hatred and displeasure; and as for Gods people they are under a great mistake on the other hand, apprehending their outward afflictions, to be signes of Gods hatred and displeasure, whereas these outward afflictions (being Sanctified) are signs of Gods everlasting love; now for the sakes of such afflicted Jobs who under bitter trials are ready to cry out he counteth me for his enemy, I have undertook this work, that they may drink those waters of Marah with more comfort; when they know that these afflictions are laid on them by one that hath an everlasting love towards them. The last reason of my

Pub-

Publishing these evidences of Gods  
 love, and Election, and Adoption,  
 is not (I hope) because I would be in  
 Print; neither because I look upon  
 these Sermons to be more worth, than  
 other Sermons that are never like to  
 come to the presse; but because several  
 Precious Souls that heard me, when I  
 did Preach upon those words in the  
 1. Ephesians the latter part of the  
 3. verse, Who hath blessed us with all  
 Spiritual blessings in heavenly things  
 in Christ, &c.) did earnestly desire me  
 to write them out those uses of trial  
 or examination, whereby they might be  
 assured, that they had an interest in  
 those spiritual blessings in heavenly  
 things in Christ, &c. which we then  
 reduced to these 12 heads: 1. the Love  
 of God, 2. Election, 3. Adoption, 4. an  
 Interest in the New Covenant, 5. Spi-  
 ritual wisdom, 6. Perseverance in grace  
 7. Pardon of Sin, 8. Sanctification of  
 our Nature; 9. Justification, of our  
 Persons, 10. the Acceptation of our Du-

Duties, II. Supportation under and Consolation in our Sufferings, 17. Glorification. And as I handled these Particulars before mentioned, I laid down some trials where<sup>by</sup> we might know, whether those Spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ, were ours, and seeing God is so ready to fulfill the desires of them that fear him; I think it is our duties in our Places, to lay out our selves to the utmost of our abilities to fulfill the desires of Gods People; especially when they desire that which may conduce to the honour of God and the good of their precious Souls: what is it that brings more honour unto the God of Heaven, then ~~to~~ holy, ~~the~~ humble, and chearful walking of his people while they are here on earth? and what is it that will cause a believer, to be more holy, humble and cheereful, than to know that he hath an interest in those spiritual blessings which are more worth than 10000 worlds? Now that Gods people

people may know that they are interested in those spiritual blessings, I have laid down many trials to evidence our interests in each of them, that so if a believer cannot experience one trial he may experience another, and if those poor labours of mine do find as good acceptance with thee, now they are in thine eyes, as they did with the people of God when they had them in their ears, I shall be the more Incouraged, to Publish the evidences of our interest in those other spiritual blessings which we have before mentioned.

And if thou gaineft any Comfort by my Poor endeavours, let God have the glory from whom Proceeds every good and perfect gift; and let the Poor Penman be a sharer in thy prayers, who is thy servant for Jesus sake.

Samuel Pack.

people may know that they are in it.  
rest in these spiritual things, there  
laid down many things to consider  
our interest in each of them that for  
a better cannot expect one thing  
be more expensive than another and if  
those poor labours of mine be found as  
good acceptance with you, then they  
are in this case, as they should be  
of the of God which they have in  
their case, I shall be the more assured  
good, to help the comfort of our  
interest in this case, spiritual things  
which we have before mention-

And if you gain any comfort  
by my poor endeavours, let  
God be the glory to whom  
praise be every good and  
perfect gift, and let the poor  
penitent be a witness to  
you, who daily labour for  
his life.

Thanked Back.

Twelve



## Twelve Discriminating Characters.

Whereby

*A poor Mourner in Sion, for want of the Evidences of Gods Love, may know that he had a being in the love of God, before he had a being in the World.*

**I**F thou art one that canst assure thy self, that thou hast an Interest in the Love of God, thou art one that hast in experimental Knowledge of this God of Love. If thou art one that hast a Practical obediencial Knowledge of God, then thou mayest comfortably and upon good grounds say, that God loves thee; but it is not every

every Knowledge of God that will Characterize a person to be an object of Gods love; for if we look into *1 Rom. 21.* we may see that there were some that had a rational confused Knowledge of God in the book of the Creatures; and yet we see in the latter end of the Chapter, they did rush into the greatest Abominations imaginable. A Knowledge of God in the book of the Creatures (only) will not keep the Creature from committing the greatest sins against God; But thou that wouldst Know upon sure grounds that God loves thee, see if thou dost know God in his power, as to Fear him; in his Mercy, as to Love him, and his faithfulness to believe him. And if all the Attributes of God have such an influence upon thee, then I dare tell thee for thy comfort, that thou mayst assure thy self that God Loves thee: For Christ who is Truth it self, sayth, *John. 10. 14.*

That



That those sheep of his whom he knows with a Knowledge of Approbation, they know him with a knowledge of Love and Obedience; But if thou art one that doest not fear God for his Greatness, nor love him for his Goodness, nor believe him for his Faithfulness; but in straits and troubles, canst allow thy self in taking indirect courses with *Saul* and *Ahaziah*, it is a sign thou hast at (Present) but little grounds to hope that thou art an object of Gods Love.

2. Thou that wouldest know whether thou canst assure thy self of the Love of God, examine thy self whether thou hast received from God those peculiar favours, which he doth give only to those who are the objects of his Love. Now there are special favours which God bestowes only on his own peculiar people: Those special favours are *A new Heart, and a new Spirit; an heart of*

*1 Sam.*  
28. 7.  
*2 Kings*  
1. 2.

*Ezek.*  
11. 19.  
20. 36.  
25, 26,  
Flesh, 27.

*Flesh, a saving knowledge of himself*  
*a self-loathing for Sin, and an enlight-*  
*ned understanding, & the fear of God,*  
*and Love to God, and Sincerity before*  
*God, and all the gifts and graces of*  
*the Spirit of God.* Now these are  
 the special favours which God be-  
 stowes only on those that are the ob-  
 jects of his Love. Oh my friends,  
 take heed you do not build your  
 hopes of Interest in Gods love upon  
 the sandy foundations of outward in-  
 joyments. Many are ready to look  
 upon their outward enjoyments, as  
 Health & Strength, Peace, and Safe-  
 ty; and the blessing of God on their  
 outward enjoyments to be infallible  
 signs of Gods love; whereas indeed  
 those outward things are many times  
 instead of being signs of Gods Love  
 (being Unsanctified and Misimpro-  
 ved) are signs of Gods Reprobate  
 anger. But if God have bestowed  
 those other favours upon thee before  
 mentioned, then thou mayst be sure  
 that

that God Loves thee. The Love of God doth in a providential way extend it self to all his Creatures; But his everlasting Love, and his choyceft and endeared affections, these amongst the sonnes and daughters of *Adam*, are only partakers of, to whom God hath given a *new Heart*, and such a practical Knowledge of himself, together with all the gifts and graces of his Spirit.

3. If thou art one that canst upon good grounds assure thy self that thou art an object of Gods Love, then this Love of God hath been of an attractive nature to draw thee to all thy Dutys both Relative and Religious, as we have it in *Jeremiah 31. 3.* *I have loved thee with an Everlasting Love; therefore with loving Kindness have I drawn thee.* My friends, I beseech you try what influence the Love of God hath upon your Hearts, in the drawing of you to those duties, which are the most contrary

trary to corrupt nature; and the most  
 loathsome to the flesh: After that  
 Christ had manifested his love to *Za-  
 cheus*, and told him that Salvation  
 was come to his house, then he could  
 take shame to himself, in the acknow-  
 ledgement of his Extortion. If thou  
 canst assure thy self of the Love of  
 God, then the Glory of the God  
 of Love will be thy ultimate End in  
 all thy duties; And when thou per-  
 ceivest pride, or self, or vain-glory  
 creeping into thy duties, oh how is  
 thy soul perplexed and disturbed.  
 But on the contrary, if thou art one  
 that doest that which is thy duty, but  
 art drawn thereto by wicked ends,  
 thou hast but little grounds to assure  
 thy self that thou art in the Love of  
 God; If thou art conversant in reli-  
 gious duties, towards God, or cha-  
 rity towards men; and art drawn  
 thereto by Pharisaical vain-glorious  
 ends; It is then high time for thee  
 to look about thee, for that hope  
 thou

thou hast of the Love of God, is but  
 a delusion of the Devil; therefore  
 see if it be Love to God, that makes  
 thee give to the Poor, and desire af-  
 ter communion with God, that draws  
 thee to hear the Word of God and  
 to pray unto God. If it be so with  
 thee, thou mayst go home with com-  
 fort, for I dare warrant thee from the  
 Word of God, that God hath loved  
 thee with an everlasting Love, & that  
 thou hadst a being in the love of God  
 before thou hadst a being in the  
 world; for though a wicked man may  
 be contented to be found in the out-  
 side of duties, for such self-ends as  
 he proposes to himself, yet there be-  
 ing enmity in his heart against God,  
 it is impossible he should propose  
 Gods glory as his main and ultimate  
 end. Therefore if thou art brought  
 to propose Gods glory as thy ulti-  
 mate end, it is an infallible sign that  
 thou art an Object of Gods Love.

4. Another sign of the Love of  
 God manifested to the Creature is,

B

when

when we are fruitful in our places, to draw others unto Jesus Christ, as well as to bring forth the fruits of an holy conversation our selves. After that the Spouse had been setting forth the excellency of the Love of Christ, and had been begging a kisse of her beloved, she was so taken with his love, that presently she crys out, *Draw me, we will run after thee*; draw me in the singular, we in the Plural will run after thee: A person that has tasted of the sweetness of the Love of God, waites all opportunities to say with *David, Come and see what God hath done for my soul*. Oh saith the soul, I was by nature an enemy to God, and not only so, but I had enmity in my heart against God; And blessed be his name that was pleased to bring down that enmity by shedding abroad his love in my heart. Thus the object of Gods Love will endeavour to bring others in Love with this lovely object the Lord Jesus Christ: in *Hosea 14.* after that

Can. I.  
2, 4.

es, that God hath (in the 4. verse) mani-  
 fested the freeness of his love to be-  
 lievers; we may see in the 5. and  
 6. verses, that God will be as the  
 Father upon Israel, and that he shall  
 grow as the lilly, and cast forth his  
 roots as Lebanon, by which is meant  
 nothing else but the fruitfulness of it.  
 5. That Soul that hath the Love  
 of God shed abroad in it is insatiably  
 desirous of more of it; a David  
 that hath tasted the sweetness of the  
 Love of God, he can in a sense there-  
 of cry out, *Lord lift thou the light* Psal. 4.  
*of thy countenance upon me,* and 6. 4. 51.  
*Lord, restore unto me the Joy of*  
*thy Salvation.* It is reported of  
 the Lyonsess, that when she hath  
 once tasted of mans flesh, she will ne-  
 ver be satisfied without more of it: &  
 when a Soul has once tasted of the  
 sweetness of the Love of the lyon of  
 the Tribe of Judah, by feeding upon  
 his flesh by Faith; he will never be  
 satisfied without more of it. Now  
 if God should put them to their  
 choice



choice (as he did *Solomon*) and ask  
 such, whether they would have the  
 shinings in of Gods countenance, or  
 the pleasures of sin: Oh, say such  
 Souls, *Give us the sweetness of thy  
 love in Christ!* But suppose a Soul  
 be asked, whether it would have the  
 Love of God or the pleasures and  
 profits of the World; oh saith the  
 Soul, the profits and pleasures of the  
 world, are but glistening vanities, that  
 are empty of what they promise, and  
 inticeing with what they have; and  
 God can quickly take the world  
 from me or me from the world: But  
 if I have once the love of God I shall  
 enjoy it for ever; for, *neither death*  
*Rom. 8 nor life, nor Angels nor Principali-*  
*38, 39 ties, nor powers, nor things present,*  
*nor things to come, nor height, nor*  
*depth, nor any other creature shall be*  
*able to separate me from the love of*  
*God which is in Christ Jesus our*  
*Lord.* Now my friends, I pray  
 see whether you have these sharp  
 appetites after more of the love of  
 God,



God, then it is indeed a sign that you  
 are objects of the love of God; or a  
 true Believer that has tasted the  
 sweetness of the love of God, is  
 ready to say as *Rachel* did in ano- *Gen. 30.*  
 ther case, Give me Children, or else  
 I dye; so saith the Soul, give  
 me more of the love of God, or else  
 my life will be a burden to me. Oh  
 saith the soul, I am compassed about  
 like *Jehosaphat* with *Moab*, *Am-*  
*mon*, and mount *Seir*; sin, the world  
 & the Devil, the father torments my  
 Spirit, and the children my flesh; and  
 being now in this deplorable state,  
 if God will not revive my soul with  
 the sweet cordials of his Love, what  
 comfort can I have in my life? Now  
 if thou art thus breathing after more  
 of the love of God, it is a sign thou  
 hast it already, or else thou wouldst  
 prefer any thing before it; but if on  
 the contrary thou canst with *Herod*  
 prefer an *Herodias*; sinful pleasure  
 before the love of God; and with

*Mat.*

14. 9.

*1 Sam.*

15. 30.

*2 Tim.*

4. 10.

*2 Chron*

28. 22.

*Saul*, prefer the love of the people of the world, before the love of God. or with *Demas*, prefer the profits of the world before the love of God. it is a sign thou never yet hast had it shed abroad in thy heart.

6. Wouldst thou know whether thou canst assure thy self of the love of God, then see whether God doth exercise thee with Afflictions, and sanctify afflictions unto thee; as unsanctified Prosperity is no certain sign of the love of God, so neither are unsanctified Afflictions; for *Achaz* was under great afflictions, and yet an object of Gods hatred, and God is pleased to Stigmatize him to the world, to be *that King Achaz*. In which God does as it were point with the finger, saying, this is that incorrigible wretch that would not be wrought upon by Afflictions. But if thou art exercised with Afflictions, and those thou art exercised with draw thee nearer unto God, and to make

people make thee mourn that thou shouldst  
 God provoke thy loving tender-hearted  
 father, to lay such strokes upon  
 God thy back; and that if thou wert put  
 ad to thy choice thou hadst rather be rid  
 of thy Sin, than of thy afflictions  
 and not be rid of thy sins also; it is a  
 love sign that thou art an object of Gods  
 love; This is cleared up from the  
 and 3 of the Revelations, compared with  
 in Psal. 94 In the Revelations, af-  
 flictions are made a sign of Gods  
 love, those whom I love I rebuke and  
 chasten, in that 94 Psal. we may see,  
 and when afflictions are signs of Gods  
 love, and that is, when they are  
 teaching Afflictions; when in Affli-  
 ctions God teacheth us to know the  
 evil of sin, in its cursed nature, which  
 is the meritorious cause of all Affli-  
 ctions. In a word, when Afflictions  
 are so sanctified as to make us love  
 God more, hate Sin more, and con-  
 temn the world more, and to desire  
 to lye down patiently under the hand  
 and

1 Sam.

3. 18.

and will of God, and say with Elia,  
*it is the Lord, let him do what seemeth  
 good in his sight*; and with Hezekiah,  
*Good is the word of the Lord*; good  
 is this affliction from the hand of my  
 good God, and that it is the grief  
 of thy soul, when thou dost find  
 a contumacious will, thwarting the  
 will of God, and this reluctancy in  
 thy will to submit to the will of God  
 under afflicting providences is thy  
 burden; then I say it is a good sign,  
 nay, an infallible sign, that God doth  
 exercise thee with those afflictions  
 in love to thy precious Soul. Indeed  
 it is too ordinary for Gods people,  
 yea his beloved ones, to look upon  
 Afflictions as signs of Gods anger;  
 but though it be so with some, yet  
 it is not so with all. I knew a gracious  
 woman in Cambridge, was wont to  
 say, that if God should not be pleased  
 sometimes to afflict her, she should  
 fear he had forgot her; and truly, I  
 think, if there were more of this  
 gracious

the gracious submissive frame of Spirit a-  
mongst Christians, in making a right  
construction of the dealings of God  
towards them; it would put a period  
to those murmurings & complaints,  
grief and that uncomfortable deportment  
which doth so much predominate even  
in Gods beloved ones when they are  
under Afflictions.

God. 7. If thou wouldst know whether  
thou art an object of Gods love, then  
see if God doth give thee Commu-  
nion with himself in dutys; an ob-  
ject of Gods hatred may enjoy the or-  
dinances of God; but only true Be-  
lievers can enjoy Communion with  
the God of Ordinances. Can. 2. 4.  
*The Spouse tells us, that when her be-  
loved brought her into the banquet-  
ing house, his banner over her was  
love; which in the original is the house  
of wines, and is therefore very fitly  
translated banquetting, because wine  
is frequently used at banquetting:  
this and that which is comprehended in  
the*

the words is mainly this, that when  
 believers are found diligently at-  
 tending on the means of grace, God  
 will at one time or other, in one de-  
 gree or other, manifest himself and  
 his love towards them. The world  
 is compared to a sea, and Gods peo-  
 ple in the world are like the disciples  
 on the sea, tossed with the waves  
 of afflictions and temptations, and  
 Christ appears to them spiritually  
 as he did to the disciples corporally,  
 but they are ready to cry out as the  
 disciples did, it is a Spirit; oh saith *the*  
 Soul, I had a little comfort in such an  
 ordinance, but I am afraid it is but a  
 Spirit, of delusion; but at length Christ  
 speaks so powerfully to the Soul, by  
 the operations of his holy Spirit, that  
 the Soul knows it to be the voice of  
 Christ. And then with the disciples  
 it gladly receives Christ into its Soul,  
 and when Christ doeth thus commu-  
 nicate himself, he doeth then mani-  
 fest his endeared affection to it: oh  
 but

but methinks, I hear some poor  
 Soul ready to say, truly here is but  
 little comfort for me, for if Gods  
 communicating himself to a Soul in  
 the manner you have been speaking  
 be a sign of Gods love, then God  
 help me, my case is bad enough, for  
 I do not find such communications  
 of the graces and comforts of the  
 Spirit to my Soul. God knows I  
 come time after time to hear the  
 word, and I go to prayer, and I re-  
 ceive the Sacrament of the Lords  
 Supper, but I come with a dead heart  
 and a dull Spirit, and so I go away a-  
 gain and have none of those quick-  
 ning influences of the Spirit reviv-  
 ing and refreshing of my Soul, God  
 doth not make me joyful in his  
 house of prayer, which makes  
 me fear that I am none of those  
 whom God loves. Poor Soul, dost  
 thou utter this mournful language,  
 in a formal complementing way, or  
 is it the language of a *Nathaniel*?  
 doth



doth it proceed really from thy heart:  
 then take this for thy comfort and  
 carry it home with thee, and let it be  
 as a cordial to revive thy poo-  
 drooping Spirits. That God hath  
 already communicated himself to thy  
 Soul: or else thou wouldst never  
 desire after communion with him in  
 duty. As a wicked earthly minded  
*Abib* (having never so much of this  
 earth) is sick with vexation of Spirit  
 for want of *Nabaths* vineyard, & so a  
 Godly Heavenly Heaven-born Saint  
 (though it doth enjoy communion  
 with God) it is dissatisfied, because it  
 thinks it hath not so much as others.  
 A stone cast up into the air will never  
 rest till it comes to the earth which  
 is its center. so God being the center  
 of a gracious Soul, it is restless with-  
 out communion with him, but on  
 the contrary, if thou canst go from  
 one duty to another and sit down  
 satisfied with the bare performance  
 of the duty; and yet art flattering thy  
 self



self that thou art an object of Gods  
 love. Intell thee thou art but feed  
 ing on the east windy and carrying  
 lye in thy right hand, for there are  
 none that can assure themselves of  
 the love of God, but they have such  
 Revelation of God to their Souls,  
 as doth fill them with Heavenly  
 joys: Or make them be dissatisfied  
 without those comfortable discove-  
 ries of God to their Souls.

8. Wouldst thou be assured of  
 the love of God through a suffering  
 Christ, then see if God hath given  
 thee an heart to desire to suffer for  
 Christ: when Christ hath helped the  
 soul by an eye of faith, to see what  
 great things he'l suffer for his sake,  
 doth as the Apostle says, constrain  
 the soul to expose it self, to the  
 greatest sufferings for the cause of  
 God, when he shall be pleased to  
 call him to it. When the love of God  
 comes to be shed abroad, in the  
 heart by the holy Ghost, it will make

a Soul say (with *Paul*) that it glorieth in tribulation; when the Soul comes to be inflamed with the love of God, many waters of affliction from God, nor floods of persecutions from men cannot drown it: oh saith the soul, how can I shew my love enough to God, that hath shewed so much love to me? But on the contrary, if thou art one that will suffer nothing for God, thou canst not upon any sure grounds assure thy self, that Christ hath suffered any thing for thee to purchase the love of God *for thee*.

9. Wouldst thou know thy interest in the love of God, then see if thou doest hate sin. For it is inconsistent, for the Revelation of Gods love to the soul, and the manifestation of the souls love to sin, to be in the soul at one and the same time: nothing gives such a mortal wound to sin, nor makes it bleed to death sooner, in the soul, than the manifestation of the love of a wounded

Saviour

Saviour that did bleed to death for the soul. My Friends, you may take this for a certain truth, that proportionably to the love of God that is manifested unto you, such will be your hatred of sin that you commit against God, as a woman that hath experienced much of her husbands love, it makes her violent against her husbands enemies, so a believer having experienced much of the love of God, sets his soul the more against sin which he knows is Gods greatest enemy: oh saith the Soul (that hath the love of God shed abroad in it) how can I hug this sin in my bosome that did pierce my dear and loving Lord Jesus to the heart, how can I hide this sin as sugar under my tongue, which did cause the tongue of my Lord Jesus to utter those bitter cries, and heart-rending expressions, with his eyes full of tears, and his heart full of sorrow, and the heavens full of lamentations; *My God*

*my*

*my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*  
 when God hath once discovered the  
 freeness of his Love unto his people;  
 they quickly say with *Ephraim*, *what*  
*have I to do any more with Idols?*  
 but if on the contrary thou lovest and  
 delightest in sin, and art ready to  
 extenuate it, it is a sign that the  
 love of God is not shed abroad in thy  
 Soul.

10. If thou art one that canst  
 really experience the love of God in  
 and to thy Soul, thou art not only  
 brought to hate sin, because it is such  
 an enemy to that God who hath ma-  
 nifested so much love to thy Soul,  
 but God hath really destroyed Sin in  
 thy Soul, it being thine enemy as  
 well as his. I shall endeavour to set it  
 forth by a similitude, and how God  
 doth manifest his love to his people  
 by destroying their corruption, sup-  
 pose a man were walking on the  
 way with his wife, and she straying  
 out of the way should be surprized  
 by

by a company of bloody cut-throats,  
 and having took away or defaced her  
 ornaments they should go about to  
 murder her; now though her hus-  
 band could stand still awhile and see  
 his wife somewhat roughly handled,  
 (that she might take heed another  
 time how she strayed so far from  
 him) yet when he sees them about  
 to murder her, then his bowells  
 yern towards her, and though she  
 were in a fault yet still she was his  
 wife, whereupon he goes to her res-  
 cue, destroyes those enemies of hers  
 which otherwise would have de-  
 stroyed her; and thus he shews his  
 love to his wife. Truly my friends  
 thus it is, a true believer hath God  
 for his husband, while we are in this  
 world; we are walking on the way  
 to heaven injoying the presence of  
 our heavenly husband; but the al-  
 lurements of the flesh and the world  
 are apt to draw us aside out of the  
 way (when we are off from our  
 watch).

watch). And presently we (like *David*) are surprized with sins and devilish lusts, which do quickly rob us of our comforts, making us to stand in need (with *David*) to cry, *Restore unto us the joy of thy salvation*: and God seemes to take but little notice of us, but when our spiritual enemies shall go about to take away our spiritual life (for it is in the nature of predominating corruption, that it would in time eat out the very life and power of Godliness) and so to expose us to eternal death. Then is the time for our Spiritual husband to shew his love to his poor spouse, in destroying those enemies; and thou that canst assure thy self of the love of God, thou rejoycest more when God doth manifest his love in destroying thy corruptions than in all outward enjoyments whatsoever. But if on the contrary thy corruptions grow and thrive as much as ever, thou hast no ground

ground to assure thy self that God loves thee. When Christ manifested his love to his spouse in encouraging of her to duty, Cant. 2. 14, 15. *Oh thou that art in the clifts of the rock, in the secret places of the staines, let me hear thy voice, let me see thy countenance, for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.* Pray mind what follows, *Take us those foxes, those little foxes which corrupt the vines or spoyle the vines, for our vines have tender grapes:* by those foxes we understand as well sin in the heart as heretick in the Church; which sins the soul rejoyceth in the destructions of, which have got an evidence of Gods Love.

VER. II. Another sign of our interest in the love of God is, if we have received spiritual life from the God of life and love, this we may see in the 16 of *Ezekiel* comparing the 6. verse with the 8. In the 8. verse we have  
 find C 2 the



the impulsive cause of our spiritual life, & that is the love of God, *thy time was the time of love.* In the 6. verse we have the effect of the Love of God towards us, and this is spiritual life, *I say unto thee live.* So likewise in the 2 Gal. 20. see how the Apostle makes out his interest in the love of God, saith he (speaking of his spiritual life) *I live, yet not I, but Christ that liveth in me; and the life that I now live is by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.* Now my friends I beseech you draw out your hearts before the Lord, and deal faithfully with your own souls, and see whether you can say with *Paul*, that the life that you now live is by the faith of the Son of God; then indeed you may comfortably read on the *verse* and say, *who loved me, and gave himself for me;* till we have received spiritual life from Christ, we can never assure our selves of the love of  
Christ,



Christ, nor any benefit by the death of Christ. And so in the 2 of the *Ephes.* we may see that our spiritual life is an effect of the great love of God toward us in Jesus Christ. Saith the Apostle in the 4. verse, *According to the great love where-with he hath loved us.* In verse the 5. *Even when we were dead in sins hath he quickned us together with Christ.* Now let us see whether the Spirit of life in Christ hath made us free from the law of sin and death. Now we know that the difference between a dead man and a living man is this; A dead man hath not his use of his senses, (as hearing, seeing, feeling, tasting, smelling) but a living man hath the use of all or some of them. Now soul, wouldst thou read the love of God in thy spiritual life, then see whether thou hast thy spiritual eye-sight; hath God anointed thy eyes with spiritual eye-salve, and made thee see in some measure the

beauty of holiness and the excellency of Christ, the worth of Gods favour, the vanity of the world and the loathsomness of Sin, so as to loath thy self for Sin: now as dead men haveing no sight, can see no more beauty or brightness in the Sun, than in a dunghill; so a Person dead in trespasses and sins can see, nor Brightness or Splendor, Beauty, or Lustre, in the Sun of Righteousness. But if thou art one that canst experience the love of God in raising thee from the death of sin to the life of Righteousness, thou canst no longer say (with the daughters of *Jerusalem*)

*Cant. 5.* *What is thy beloved more than another beloved;* but thou wilt be ready to say (with the daughters of *Sion*)

*Cant. 5.* *my beloved is white and Ruddy the chiefeſt of ten thousand.* And as this spiritual life doth convince a man of the Excellency of Christ, so likewise of the ugliness of Sin: Now soul, see if thou hast this spiritual feeling: we  
know

know that as a dead man cannot see  
 he cannot feel; though you should  
 lay a millstone upon him he is sensi-  
 ble of no more weight than if it were  
 feather, but a living man is quickly  
 sensible of a little weight: so is it with  
 one spiritually dead in trespasses and  
 sins; he feels no weight in his Sins  
 though they be heavier than the  
 whole creation, though sin be so hea-  
 vy that it is a burden to God, good an-  
 gels, & good Men, & wicked Angels;  
 and the whole creation; yet a wick-  
 ed man that is spiritually dead feels  
 no weight therein: but if thou hast  
 this spiritual life thou art made sensi-  
 ble of the burden of Sin, whether in  
 action, in thought, or in word, and  
 thou hast much trouble upon thy spi-  
 rit for those sins, which a wicked  
 man would make nothing of; and if  
 it be so with thee, then go home with  
 comfort, thou art one that mayst say  
 that God hath loved thee with an  
 everlasting love and that God hath

nifested his love to thee in raising thee from the death of sin to the life of righteousness.

12. And lastly, wouldst thou know whether thou art an object of Gods love? then see if God be the highest object of thy love, for though Gods love to us do not flow from our love to God (for saith *John*, *we love him because he first loved us*) yet our love to God is an infallible symptom, and glorious effect of Gods love to us; for though God doth not love thee because thou lovest him, yet till thou doest love him thou hast no ground to believe that he doth love thee; now in regard that Gods beloved ones are so ready to question their love to God as well as Gods love to them, I intend to insist upon this Particular by it self, and all that I shall say to it at Present is this, that if thou art one that lovest God, thou doest love the People of God, and the ordinances of God, and wilt not

fit

I *John*.  
1. 9.

fit down satisfied in an ordinance;  
without communion with God in the  
ordinance, and thou hast an impla-  
cable hatred of sin: now my friends  
see if it be so with you, doth your  
love to God thus manifest it self:

But if it be otherwise with thee,  
instead of hateing sin you love it, in-  
stead of making communion with  
God your end in duty, you make  
self, pride, and vain glory your end:  
If instead of letting your thoughts  
dwell upon God, ~~you~~<sup>a</sup> are dwelling  
upon the world and vanity; you can  
have but little well-grounded hopes  
that you love God, and consequently  
that God loves you; for saith the  
Apostle, we love him because he first  
loved us; in which words we have,  
first an effect, Secondly a cause; the  
effect is our love to God, we love  
him; Secondly the cause, God loves  
us: and saith Jesus Christ the Wise-  
dome of the father, I love them that  
love me; we must not think the  
mean-

meaning of the holy Ghost in that Scripture is to make our love to God the cause of Gods love to us, but the evidence of it. Now my friends, I beseech you gather up all again; and see whether you can experience in your own souls that you have a true knowledge of God and the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, and whether this love of God doth constrain thee to duty. And whether thou art a fruit-bearing Christian, and doest, in the place in which God hath put thee, endeavour to bring others to God; and examine thine unsatiable desires after more of this love of God; and examine whither God doth sanctify afflictions unto thee, and give thee communion with himself in duty; and art thou made willing to suffer for God; and art thou made to hate sin; and hath God destroy'd thy enemies which are thy sins: and see if thou hast received spiritual life from God, and hast a Sincere love

to God. Now to conclude, if thou findest none of these marks in thy soul of Gods love, thy case is sad, I would not be in thy Condition for ten thousand worlds: yet though I would discourage thee from going on in thy Sin, because a constant persisting in a course of Sin, is a dreadful Sign of Gods hatred; yet I dare not discourage thee in thy attendance on the means of grace because those are Gods lattices through which he does flourish himself, *Can. 2. 9.* Or, as we have it translated, shew himself unto poor souls: therefore thou that canst experience nothing of the love of God; I beseech thee as thou tendrest the good of thy precious and immortal soul, be constant in attending on the means of grace; thou knowest not how soon God may dart in such beams of his love to thy soul through the thick glass of Gospel ordinances; as may make thee cry  
out



out with the spouse, *stay me with  
Flagons, strew me a bed with Ap-  
ples, for I am sick of Love.* And for  
you that can say you have had ex-  
perience of the love of God; and  
can say of a truth that Christ  
hath kissed you with the kisses of  
his Lips, and that his left Arm  
hath been under your neck, and  
his right Arm hath imbraced you;  
you that can say that the time was  
when You did sit under the ban-  
ner of my beloved with great de-  
light, and his fruit was sweet to  
your tast; you that can say, that  
the time was when God did flou-  
rish himself unto your Souls,  
through the Lattice, and the Sun  
of Righteousness did shine upon  
your Tabernacle; That God did  
so manifest himself unto your  
Souls in all or most of his Ordi-  
nances, that it may be you did  
not know whether you were in  
the body or out of the body, (as

*Paul*

*Paul* saith) your hearts have been  
 forewarned and affected with the  
 presence of God by the influence  
 of his Spirit; Now it may be you  
 walk in darkness and have no  
 light, instead of that sweet com-  
 munion you had with God in du-  
 ty; it may be there may be no-  
 thing but deadness, and dulness  
 of heart, and indisposition of Soul  
 to duty; It may be instead of that  
 shining in of Gods love unto your  
 Souls, you may (with *Job*) appre-  
 hend God to be your Enemy, and  
 be ready to say that God doth set  
 a print on your Heels and on your  
 Feet, and sew up your iniqui-  
 ties in a bag, and seal up your sins,  
*Job* 13. 24, 26, 27. you that  
 could formerly say (with *David*)  
 come and see what God hath done  
 for my Soul, it may be, are now rea-  
 dy to say (with *Job*,) have pity upon  
 us oh our friends, for the hand of  
 the Lord is upon us, *Job* 19, 21. and  
 with

with the Church in the *Lamentations*; Is it nothing to you all you that pass by? Behold and see if there be any sorrow like my sorrow, *Lam. 1. 12.* which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce Wrath. Oh woe is us, for the Day of Comfort and Consolation is passing away and the shadows of the evening and morning are stretched out. Now poor souls, you that are thus in Hell upon Earth for want of comfort and consolation from Heaven, give me leave to speak two or three words to you, in order to the reducing you to your former comfortable estate; you that are thus afflicted and troubled with Tempest, and not comforted; it will be your prudence and it doth highly concern you to take notice what wind hath brought this Tempest, which hath filled

filled your Souls with such clouds  
of despondencies: for either the  
East Wind of sinful Security, or  
the North Wind of pinching  
Adversity, or the South Wind  
of unsanctified Prosperity, ~~will~~ *will*  
undoubtedly raise these storms  
in your Souls, which for some  
time and in some measure make  
an interposition between the  
comfortable rayes of the Light  
of Gods Countenance and thy  
poor soul. For the first, see if the  
east wind of sinful security hath  
not raised this Tempest of de-  
jection and despondency: though  
God doeth greatly delight to  
secure his people from the God  
of this world, yet his people will  
find but small comfort in their  
sinful security before God, whilst  
they be in this World; though  
God doeth so watch over a be-  
liever that he shall never be o-  
vercome by temptations, yet for  
want

want of watchfulness in a believer, God may suffer him to be exposed to Temptation; though a true believer cannot lose the God of comfort and consolation, yet he may for a time lose the comfort and consolation of his God: if the blasting East wind of carnal security make the ears thin and empty, no wonder if thou art not filled with the south wind of comfort and consolation; if *David* and *Peter* think their mountain so strong that they shall not be moved, to deny the Fountain of their Comfort and Consolation, God will most certainly deny them (for a time) the Comforts from the Fountain. Again in the next place, see if the south wind of unsanctified prosperity have not blown up these storms of sanctifying Adversity; for Gods end in imbittering our beloved outward enjoyments (by denying

denying us his comforting presence) is to make his consolations more sweet unto us, and us more earnestly to labour after the enjoyment of them: when Gods beloved ones have too much delight in, and too much love to the world, so as to undervalue the heavenly manna of Gods love; then the God of love will manifest his delight in, and love to his people, in leaving them (as to his comforting presence) (with the prodigal) to feed upon the husks of outward enjoyments, till they are brought to see the incongruity, that is between the empty, inticeing, transitory vanity of this World; and their sublime and immortal Souls, which can receive no real comfort from, or any satisfactory delight or complacency, in any thing but what is of its own nature. For the soul of a believer meerly as it is a Creature, is an im-

D

mortal

mortal substance and the very breath  
of God, and therefore no wonder  
though the creature find such an in-  
sufficiency of comfort in all outward  
injoyments, they being so much be-  
low and unsuitable to its nature. And  
that I take to be the reason why So-  
lomon saith *Prov. 14. 13.* *that in*  
*the midst of laughter the heart may be*  
*sad;* the fading, earthly, mortal body  
may laugh in the enjoyment of fad-  
ing, earthly, momentary things; and  
yet the heart and soul may be sad for  
want of something of its own nature  
for to take delight and compla-  
cency in. Now let us draw to Con-  
clusion, in a word there must be an  
assimilation between the Object of  
delight, and the Subject delighting  
itself in that object. As for exam-  
ple, a fish of a cold and moist nature  
delights in the passive element of  
water, being of its own nature; But  
the Salamander being of a fiery na-  
ture



rare delights in the active element of  
 fire. So a true believer, being a new  
 creature, born of God by regenera-  
 tion, cannot but mourn in the bitter-  
 ness of his soul, when it does consi-  
 der how the fleshly part has prevail-  
 ed against his spiritual part (being off  
 from his watch) as (with Michal) to  
 send away his blessed King David  
 (as to his comforting presence) and  
 have left nothing but an Image of  
 outward enjoyments in the room  
 thereof. And if Gods beloved Samp-  
 son will be placing of themselves  
 in the laps of the deceitful Dalilahs,  
 you can expect nothing but that  
 those sweet Syrene-like songs should  
 end in the shipwrack of their spiri-  
 tual joys: Having provoked God,  
 to deliver them up (with Sampson)  
 to the Philistins, to cut off the seven  
 locks of their spiritual strength, and  
 leave them in the hands of their spi-  
 ritual enemies, that will by (filling

of their Souls with horror and vexation of Spirit) do their utmost, to keep those from heaven whilst they live, which they see they cannot keep from heaven when they dye. And now I come to the *North* wind of affliction, which does often make Gods *Dauids* cry out, I have cleansed my heart in vain, and with Gods *Jobs* to look upon outward afflictions to be signs of Gods anger and displeasure, whereas indeed as well the *North* Wind of sanctified afflictions as the *South* Wind of sanctified prosperity blowing upon our gardens, will make our spices flow forth, will make us to be much in exercising the gifts and graces of the spirit of God in us. Now, soul, see which of these winds it is that has blown up this dreadful storm in thy soul; if it be the *East* Wind of sinful security, or the *South* Wind of unsanctified prosperity, or the  
*North*

*North* Wind of adversity? And indeed as sin is the meritorious cause of affliction, so affliction makes a soul apprehend it self to be a greater sinner than others, when it is more afflicted than others. And the Devil has a great hand in this, for as he perswades them ~~that~~ that their prosperitis is a sign of Gods love, so he perswades Gods people, that afflictions are signs of Gods hatred. If the people of God did but know the gracious end God has in afflicting them, they would never look upon them to be signs of his displeasure; For Gods ends in afflicting his people are to glorify his wisdom in their Direction, and his holiness in their Sanctification, and his power in their Supportation and Preservation, and that they might be more conformable to Christ their head, and that they may hate sin the more, and condemn the world the more, and long after heaven the more, and that they

may be in the better capacities to sympathize with Gods people in their suffering, when they are under the like afflictions, and to make heaven the sweeter to them, by making the world bitter. Now soul, thou that art under these clouds, and tossed with these tempests, and not comforted, be sure to look often into the waters of the sanctuary upon the bended knees of thy soul, and there thou shalt see the Comet that has made the interposition between the shining rays of Gods love and thy poor soul; and when thou hast found out this *Achan* that troubles the camp; that made thee flee before the men of *Aie*; ~~and~~ after thou hast conquered *Jericho*, and by Gods ministers sounding of the Gospel-Trumpet beat down the walls of the cursed *Jericho* of the Kingdom of darkness in thy soul; when thou hast found out the *Achan* that would preserve any of the cursed thing, be im-  
potant

portant with thy blessed *Joshaab*, which brings his true *Israel* into the land of promise, that he would pass the sentence of death, on this theevish *Achan*, that first stole thy heart from the God of comfort and consolation, and then stole from thee the sweet consolations of thy God: Oh soul, let not the Silver or Gold of worldly-mindedness which lies hid in the midst of *Achan's* tent, let not any external profit that thy sin may bring thee in, make *Achan* faire ever the better; but seek diligently for it, for it lyes hid in the midst of the tent where it might be the least suspected, & see if *Achan* has not been a troubler to thee by stealing something else besides the wedg of Gold, see if he has not got a cloak of *Shinar* or a *Babylonish* garment of self-righteousness.

My meaning is this; look diligently into thy heart, see if thou art not ready to be prideing of thy self in thy

dutys, and having had great Inlargements in prayer, art thou not ready to think that that duty (as it comes from thee) is more likely to find acceptance with God, than those poor broken expressions of thy friend, whom it may be thou contemnest as not having such abilities, as thou hast. Now soul, if thou canst find this in thy heart, then thou mayst say there is the *Babylonish* garment, which the old man the unregenerate part, the cursed *Achan* has stole, and by which God was provoked against thee; but if thou canst say of a truth upon serious self-examination that it is otherwise with thee, and that thy heart doeth not condemn thee of stealing these wedges of gold, that thou hast not an inordinate love to the world, & that thou hast not stole the *Babylonish* garment of spiritual pride in duty; and through grace thou canst say; that neither the *East Wind* of sinful security, nor the

*South* Wind of unsanctified prosperity, nor the *North* Wind of Pinching adversity have brought these clouds over thy soul; then comfort thy self with this, that it will not be long ere the Sun of righteousness will dispel those thick and foggy mists of dejection and despondency with the resplendent rays of his love and favour *Mal. 4. 2.* it will not be long before God will say to thy Soul, oh thou afflicted and tossed with tempests and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with faire colours, and thy foundations with sapphires, *Isaiah. 54. 11.* it will not be long before the Lord will say unto thee thy maker is thy husband *vers. 5* though now thou lookest upon thy self, to be a cast-off and a refused Creature; it will not be long before God will say unto thee by his Spirit in his promises *vers. 7.* though for a small moment he hide his face from thee, yet with everlasting kindness will



will he have mercy upon thee: And though now in the extremity of thy grief, thou mayest seem to thy self and others, to go on frowardly, or to turn aside, be worse by thy troubles, yet saith God, I have seen his ways & will heal him, I will lead him also & will restore comfort to him & to his

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 be to make comfort so much the  
 more sweet; and welcome to thy  
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 thee that thou art not with *Saul*,  
 seeking comfort from a musical in-  
 strument, or going to the Devil for  
 comfort, *1 Samuel. 16. 23. 28. 7.* Or  
 that thou art not with *Cain* seeking  
 comfort from riches, *Gen. 4. 15. 17.*  
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 fort

fort in his own way ; and remember  
 therefore this soul, that Gods time to  
 comfort thee is the best time, and  
 howsoever those various revolutions  
 in thy soul, those thy many Ups  
 and Downs, may seem to threaten  
 thee with a miserable disappoint-  
 ment of thy comfort, yet know this  
 that God who takes care of tem-  
 poral sparrows, will not forget his  
 spiritual doves: oh but it may be  
 some may be ready to say, if I were  
 some eminent Christian such as *Peter*  
 or *Paul*, or *Silas* and *John* were, then  
 I should think that God would con-  
 cern himself with my Condition, but  
 I am a poor inconsiderable Creature  
 slighted by the world & slighted by  
 Gods people, imputing my trou-  
 ble to be nothing else but a pettish  
 humour, and truly, I am fear-  
 ful I may too truly say with the  
 Church, *Isa. 49. 14.* That God hath  
 forgotten me and doth overlook  
 my trouble: poor soul take heed thou  
 dost



doest not dishonour God, by having  
 such low and unbecoming thoughts  
 of him, as to think that there is any  
 thing so great as not to be within  
 his power, or to be so small as not  
 to be within his care. Thy Creation,  
 and Redemption, cost God as much  
 power and love, as the Creation  
 and Redemption of *Peter* or *Paul* did,  
 and God doth as much concern him-  
 self with thy condition as if he had  
 nothing else to look after, and there-  
 fore comfort thy self with the Con-  
 sideration of that care and wisdom  
 which God doth manifest in all the  
 windings and circumstances of every  
 Dispensation he orders forth unto  
 thee.

I shall conclude this Discourse  
 with a word to those who have had  
 his assurance of the love of God  
 and still retain it. All that I shall  
 say to these is this, be sure that your  
 evidences of the love of God be  
 fully grounded upon the forementi-  
 oned

oned trials, and not upon the enjoyment of outward mercies; and then be found constant and conscionable in the discharge of all thy relative and religious duties; that thou maist keep up in thy soul the fresh apprehension of Gods love continually; for though thou that art a believer, canst never lose the love of God as to the habit or being of it, yet thou maist lose the love of God as to the evidence of it unto thee, and therefore Christ bid those to whom he had discovered his love, to continue in his love, and therefore saith *Jude* keep your selves in the love of God.

*Object.* *Hos.* 9. 15. doeth not God tell his people that he would love them no more; in which words, there are two things.

First something implied, and supposed.

Secondly. Something pressed and proposed; that which is implied,

is that God did love them, but that which is expressed is, that he would love them no more. Therefore how can you make it appear that we can never lose the love of God.

*Ans.* We do grant that there is implied a love of God to those who were no more to be the objects of his love, but what a love was it? we know God hath a general love to all his creatures, and this general love of pity extends it self not only to rational creatures, but even to wicked men: God hath a love of pity even to wicked men as in *Iſa. 63. 9.* *In his love and in his pity he redeemed them,* who were they that God hath such a love of Pity to, we may see in the *10 vers.* *It was such as were rebels against him and vexed his holy Spirit,* and in the *Pſalm. 78 38 vers.* *We may see that God was so full of compassion that he is said to forgive their iniquitys, & would not stir up all his wrath, yet though God did*  
extend

so much pity towards them, it did  
 manifest it self only in externals: let  
 us take a view of this people, that  
 were such large sharers in this love  
 of pity and compassion of God; if  
 we look into the 8. *vers.* we may see  
 their Stubborness and Rebellion, in  
 the 9. *vers.* they turned back in the  
 day of battel, in the 10. *vers.* they  
 break Covenant with God, and did  
 not walk in his wayes, in the 11.  
*vers.* they were forgetful of his  
 goodness, and for many verses toge-  
 ther we may see their infidelity with  
 the highest aggravation imaginable  
 and in the 29. *vers.* we may see  
 their great ingratitude in abuseing  
 the mercys of God, first to eat and  
 drink for the gratifying their lusts,  
 and then to rise up to play, in the  
 32. *vers.* we may see their incorri-  
 gible-ness and unbelief, and yet not-  
 withstanding all this, God had such  
 a general compassion of them, and  
 such love to them, as did ingage him  
 so

so to manifest his love towards them, as to forgive their iniquitys so as not to cut them off suddenly, and yet notwithstanding all this pitifull love of God, extended to them in a general way, they still remain objects of his wrath and abhorrency, so that he would neither let their bodys come into *Canaan*, nor their souls into heaven, and this love mentioned in *Hosea* is only such a love as is mentioned in the 63. *Isai.* and it is no more then if the Lord had said unto *Ephraim*, I have exercised much patience towards thee, ever since *Jereboam* did set up his abominable Idolatry, I have waited to be gracious a long time, but now I will drive them out of my house I will unchurch them, I will take away mine ordinances from them, they shall no more enjoy the ordinary Symptoms of my love, to wit, those spiritual priviledges and advantages by which I do in a general way manifest,

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my

fest my love to a Nation in general,  
 and though I dare not be positive in  
 my assertion, I being but a man,  
 and therefore not infallible, yet I  
 cannot but judg this to be the mean-  
 ing, of the good spirit of our God,  
 because the Ordinances of Good,  
 vouchsafed to a Nation, are in Scrip-  
 ture declared to be manifestations of  
 his love. Thus having endeavoured  
 to shew the meaning of the Holy  
 Ghost in this Scripture, in answer to  
 what might be objected (from it) a-  
 gainst the Immutability of the Love  
 of God to believers, I shall draw up  
 all to this conclusion, that though *God*  
 may seem to be mutable, in the ex-  
 ternal manifestations of his love to a  
 Nation in general, yet he is immuta-  
 ble in his eternal love to every true  
 believer in particular.

And this is that which may be a  
 ground of much consolation to those  
 that can by what hath been said,  
 make it clear to their own souls, that  
 they

they are such that God hath such an everlasting love unto, for if thou art an object of Gods everlasting love, his Wisdom shall be engaged for thy Direction: and his Power for thy Protection, and his Holiness for thy Sanctification, and his mercy for thy Salvation, Oh my Friends, I want words to set forth and express the thousand part of your happiness, that are in the love and favour of God, truly my friends, I may say of the love of God as *David* did of the City of God, glorious things are spoken of thee, O thou love of God, thou that art an object of Gods love, thou hast all the Attributes of God, and the offices of Christ, and the influences of the Spirit all engaged for thy Sanctification and Comfort and Consolation: the evidence of this love of God is, that which will be unto thee bread in famine, drink in drought, peace in war, health in Sicknes, life in death: the love of God in Christ



manifested to thy soul, is that tree which will sweeten the waters of *Marah*, even the bitter waters of affliction: The sense of this love of God is that which will lift thee up above the frowns & flatteries of the world: the clear discoveries of Gods love will make thee willing to suffer from God or for God: and to conclude all in a word, the sense of Gods love will make thee live holily, and live humbly, and live thankfully, and live watchfully, and live believingly, and live comfortably, and live fruitfully, and dye joyfully, in full assurance of reigning gloriously with him who loved thee before all time, and manifested his everlasting love to thee in time, injoying the full fruition of his love when time shall be swallowed up of eternity; and then there shall be no more sinfull

*between the* Comets to make an interposition, the Sun of Righteousnes and thy poor soul, but (eagle-like) thou shalt be continually

continually above the clouds of Sin  
or Sufferings, and injoy in a greater  
measure, then now thou art capable,  
of the love of God, in as great bright-  
ness and serenity, as thou wilt then  
be in a capacity to receive. Now to  
the God of love by all the objects of  
his love be ascribed all Honour and  
Glory for ever and ever, *Amen.*

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*F I N I S.*

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